



# Garner Police Department Written Directive

**Chapter:** 800 - Operations

**Directive:** 850.03 - Police Communications

**Authorized by:** Chief Joe Binns

**Effective Date:** June 15, 2021

**CALEA Standards:** 81.1.1, 81.1.2, 81.2.1, 81.2.2, 81.2.3, 81.2.4, 81.2.5, 81.2.6, 81.2.7, 81.2.8, 81.2.9, 81.2.10, 81.2.11, 81.2.12, 81.2.13, 81.2.14, 81.3.1, 81.3.2, 81.3.3 and 81.3.4.  
(5<sup>th</sup> Edition)

## 850.3.1 - Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to provide regulations and procedures for the radio dispatch of police calls for service, and for ensuring effective radio communication among police units and the [Raleigh-Wake Emergency Communications Center \(RWECC\)](#).

## 850.3.2 - Policy

It is the policy of the Garner Police Department to participate in a countywide Public Safety Communications System to provide employees with radio communications. The Chief of Police will be responsible for the communication function.

## 850.3.3 - Definitions

- A. Clear Text – the use of “plain English” when communicating via the police radio system in lieu of using “ten codes” or other agency-specific codes.
- B. Division of Criminal Information Network (DCI) – The criminal information network maintained by the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) that serves as the state-level crime data repository. The SBI also maintains a computer system that provides automated DCI data communications for local law enforcement agencies.
- C. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) - The nationwide electronic clearinghouse of crime data maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). NCIC is used to collate and disseminate nationwide crime data by means of local agency submissions.
- D. Raleigh-Wake Emergency Communications Center (RWECC) – the contracted emergency communications center that provides call-taking and dispatching services for the Department.
- E. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual - A manual of standard operating procedures for the administration and operation of RWECC, serving as a guide to personnel assigned to RWECC.

## 850.3.4 - Federal Communications Commission (81.1.2)

All radio communications will be conducted in accordance with the procedures and requirements of the [Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\)](#). The RWECC has applicable regulatory agency licenses and has access to the FCC’s current rules and regulations.

**850.3.5 – Administration (81.1.1; 81.2.1; 81.2.9; 81.2.12; 81.3.3)**

- A. The Raleigh-Wake Emergency Communications Center (RWECC) will serve as the communications component for the Department.
1. The RWECC is a multi-jurisdictional entity; their accountability to the Garner Police Department is specified in a written agreement between the two agencies.
  2. Detailed authority and responsibilities of personnel assigned to the RWECC will be described in the Telecommunicator job description and other agreements or authorizing documents.
  3. RWECC personnel will be trained in obtaining relevant information for each call for service and in dispatch protocol to enhance the safety of officers and assist in anticipating conditions to be encountered at the scene. Specific procedures for obtaining such information will be outlined in the RWECC SOP Manual.
  4. All complaints originating from Department personnel pertaining to the operation of the RWECC, complaints against a Telecommunicator or regarding the dispatching of police units, or suggestions for improving communication service will be made in writing through the chain-of-command. These complaints or suggestions will be forwarded to the RWECC Director or his/her designee for review and to ensure corrective action is taken, when necessary.
- B. The primary functions of the RWECC are:
1. Radio Communications - to include dispatching calls for service, monitoring radio traffic from Department personnel, and coordinating personnel via the police radio.
    - a. Telecommunicators are responsible for the dispatching of all Departmental units, keeping in mind the patrol area, assigned responsibilities and duties of each unit, and the availability of the unit.
    - b. Dispatching of units will carry full authority of an order unless countermanded by a Department supervisor.
  2. Telephone Communications - to include receiving calls for service and utilization of the E911 system.
    - a. This provides for twenty-four (24) hour, toll-free voice, text, and TDD telephone access for emergency calls for service.
    - b. The RWECC's telephone system has the ability to separate emergency from non-emergency calls to reduce the likelihood of an emergency caller receiving a busy signal.
    - c. Emergency calls that are misdirected into the RWECC will be promptly relayed either by directing the caller to the proper agency/person or by taking the information and directly conveying it to the correct party.
  3. Automated Data Communication - to include the operation of NCIC/DCI terminal and automated communications with other agencies; and
  4. Alarm Monitoring - to include receiving alarm notifications and dispatching patrol units when necessary.
- C. The Wake County Sheriff's Office provides access to local, state, and federal criminal justice information systems (i.e. NCIC/DCI) for use by officers in field and investigative efforts.

**850.3.6 - Communications Center Access and Security (81.3.1; 81.3.2)**

- A. Access to the RWECC will be limited to RWECC staff, Department supervisors, and other personnel specifically authorized by RWECC staff to enter for legitimate business purposes.
- B. Security measures for the RWECC will be established in their Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOP). Such measures will include (but not be limited to):
  - 1. Limiting access to the RWECC to authorized personnel;
  - 2. Protecting communications equipment;
  - 3. Providing for back-up resources in the event of a failure of the primary power source, CAD software, and/or telephone lines; and
  - 4. Providing security for transmission lines, antennas, and power sources.

**850.3.7 - Requests for Service (81.2.3; 81.2.6; 81.2.7; 81.2.11)**

- A. Requests for service, criminal and non-criminal, may be received by telephone, in person, or initiated by officers in the field. The following information will be recorded within the automated Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System for all calls for service received by the RWECC:
  - 1. A unique control number - this number will serve as the basis for filing and retrieving subsequent reports of the incident;
  - 2. Date and time of the request;
  - 3. Name and address of the complainant, if known;
  - 4. Nature of the incident reported;
  - 5. Location of the incident reported;
  - 6. Identification of the officer(s) assigned as primary and, if applicable, backup;
  - 7. Time of dispatch;
  - 8. Time of officer(s) arrival;
  - 9. Time of officer(s) return to service; and
  - 10. Disposition or status of the reported incident.
- B. The RWECC shall establish procedures which:
  - 1. Judge characteristics of the call for information or services to determine whether an emergency or non-emergency response is required, and
  - 2. Inform callers of the Department's response including direct law enforcement services and/or referral to other agencies. A listing of telephone numbers for emergency service agencies will be maintained in the RWECC to be immediately available to RWECC personnel.
- C. Victim/witness assistance will be available twenty-four (24) hours a day beginning with the call to the RWECC (see also [GPD directive 820.03, Victim-Witness Assistance](#)).

- D. In the event that the RWECC receives requests for the delivery of emergency messages, the following protocol will be used:
1. When requests for the delivery of emergency messages that are not related to ongoing Departmental investigations are received, they will be referred to an on-duty patrol supervisor.
  2. Emergency messages will be delivered in accordance with guidelines set forth in [GPD directive 820.03, Victim-Witness Assistance](#). Emergency messages will not be relayed by telephone.

#### **850.3.8 - Telephone Response (81.2.14)**

- A. It is the policy of the Department to offer telephone response to certain categories of calls for service. Telephone reporting will allow the Department to evaluate and address citizen needs and use existing manpower in a more efficient manner.
- B. The following requirements must be met for a request for service to be handled by telephone response:
1. Personal injury has not occurred nor is there imminent danger or injury;
  2. There is not the imminent danger of property damage;
  3. The incident is not in progress;
  4. There is no significant physical evidence to be obtained at the scene;
  5. There are no suspects nor witnesses to be interviewed;
  6. The caller is agreeable to service by telephone; and
  7. The crime is a misdemeanor or is a felony involving a property crime that meets the above criteria.

#### **850.3.9 - Radio Communication Procedures (81.2.2; 81.2.4; 81.2.8; 81.2.10; 81.3.4)**

- A. RWECC responsibilities include (but are not limited to) the following:
1. Providing continuous dispatching service twenty-four (24) hours per day, every day of the year.
  2. Recording the status of officers when they are out of service through the use of the automated Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System, or other designated methods.
  3. Dispatching the appropriate number of officers and/or supervisors to calls based on information provided by the Department (see also [GPD directive 820.01, Patrol Operations](#)).
- B. Officer responsibilities include (but are not limited to) the following:
1. All personnel assigned to the Patrol Division and the Traffic Safety Unit, unless exempted by a supervisor, will maintain radio contact with the RWECC at all times while in-service, and shall be ready to and will accept all radio calls assigned.
  2. All personnel will utilize proper radio etiquette regardless of who they are communicating with or the talk-group they are communicating on (to include encrypted talk groups). Radio messages will be kept as concise as possible; non-emergency car-to-car traffic should take place on a non-dispatch talk group.
  3. All personnel will communicate with the RWECC and car-to-car utilizing clear text language. The only exceptions to this are as follows:

- a. The following "10 codes" may be utilized due to system-wide acceptance and/or officer safety concerns:
    - 1) "10-4" – Okay / acknowledge
    - 2) "10-8" – In service
    - 3) "10-23" – On the scene
    - 4) "10-32" – Man with a gun
    - 5) "10-46" – Disabled vehicle
    - 6) "10-50" – Traffic crash
    - 7) "10-89" – Bomb threat
    - 8) "10-96" – Mental subject
    - 9) "10-99" – Wanted or stolen indicated
  - b. The following "signal codes" may be utilized due to minimizing public exposure to certain types of incidents and/or officer safety concerns:
    - 1) "Signal 25" – Officer needs assistance
    - 2) "Signal 66" – Rape
    - 3) "Signal 68" – Suicide
  4. All sworn personnel (excluding Command Staff) are to advise RWECC of their assigned unit numbers at the beginning of their shift. This may be accomplished via radio or via MCT.
  5. The Department issues cellular telephones to various employees based on assignment. These devices (nor any other emerging technologies such as voice-over internet protocol) are not to be used to circumvent normal radio communications procedures. To ensure officer safety and accountability, all police operations are to be conducted on the radio frequencies assigned for police activities unless other means are authorized by a supervisor.
- C. Inter-Agency Communication
1. The County-wide Public Safety Communications System provides the Department with multichannel radio communications allowing for communications with interacting agencies.
  2. The RWECC coordinates the use of these inter-agency talk groups; personnel are to receive clearance from RWECC prior to using one or more of these talk groups.
  3. The use of "ten codes" or "signal codes" is prohibited for inter-agency communication to avoid miscommunication or unintended delays.
- D. Emergency Radio Communications
1. The Garner Police Department utilizes portable and mobile (in-car) radios which have an "emergency" button which officers can activate in the event they need emergency assistance.

- a. This button transmits a signal to the RWECC and the officer's microphone becomes open allowing the telecommunicator or anyone else monitoring the emergency channel to hear what is happening without the officer needing to press the transmit button.
  - b. When an emergency button is activated, RWECC staff will assess the officer's situation and send available assistance to him as soon as possible.
2. In the event an officer calls for emergency assistance, all available officers will respond.
- E. The RWECC will record emergency telephone conversations and all radio transmissions made or received on non-encrypted talk-groups.
  1. Records will be made by automatic taping devices located within the RWECC and will be retained for a minimum of sixty (60) days.
  2. Detailed procedures for the storage, maintenance, and utilization of such recording will be established in the RWECC SOP Manual.
  3. Access to the information in these recordings has been determined to be public record. Personnel needing specific information from such recordings are to contact an on-duty RWECC supervisor for assistance in obtaining copies of the tapes.

**850.3.10 - Alarms - Commercial and Private (81.2.13)**

- A. The RWECC will receive reports of alarm activation, both commercial and residential, via commercial alarm companies. When the alarm is within the Department's jurisdiction the RWECC will dispatch an officer, regardless of the apparent cause of the alarm activation.
- B. Officers responding to alarm calls shall make reasonable efforts to determine whether the alarm activation was legitimate, due to inclement weather, or an apparent false alarm.

**850.3.11 - RWECC Access to Departmental Resources (81.2.5)**

- A. The Department shall provide RWECC staff with immediate means of access to the following resources:
  1. The on-duty supervisor and other command personnel;
  2. A current roster of all on-duty personnel;
  3. Visual maps detailing the agency's service area;
  4. Officer status indicators; and
  5. Tactical dispatching plans for events including (but not limited to) bank robberies or vehicle pursuits.
- B. The RWECC will have immediate access to internal written procedures and telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services for the Department.